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Thank You, Erin Hunter

[image]

Thank you, Erin Hunter,

For without your heart-warming series, none of this would have been possible.

Allegiances

[image]

T H U N D E R C L A N

Leader

Bluestar- blue-gray she-cat, tinged with silver around her muzzle.

Deputy

Tigerclaw- big dark brown tabby tom with unusually long front claws.

Medicine Cat

Yellowfang- old dark gray she-cat with a broad, flattened face, formerly of ShadowClan.

Warriors (toms and she-cats without kits)

Whitestorm- big white tom.
Apprentice, Sandpaw

Darkstripe- sleek black-and-gray tabby tom.
Apprentice, Dustpaw

Longtail- pale tabby tom with dark black stripes.
Apprentice, Swiftpaw

Runningwind- swift tabby tom.

Willowpelt- very pale gray she-cat with unusual blue eyes.

Mousefur- small dusky brown she-cat.

Fireheart- handsome ginger tom.

Apprentice, Cinderpaw

Graystripe- long-haired solid gray tom.
Apprentice, Brackenpaw

Apprentices (more than six moons old, in training to become warriors)

Sandpaw- pale ginger she-cat.

Dustpaw- dark brown tabby tom.

Swiftpaw- black-and-white tom.

Cinderpaw- dark gray she-cat.

Brackenpaw- golden brown tabby tom.

Queens (she-cats expecting or nursing kits)

Frostfur- beautiful white coat and blue eyes.

Brindleface- pretty tabby.

Goldenflower- pale ginger coat.

Speckletail- pale tabby, and the oldest nursery queen.

Elders (former warriors and queens, now retired)

Halftail- big dark brown tabby tom with part of his tail missing.

Smallear- gray tom with very small ears. The oldest tom in ThunderClan.

Patchpelt- small black-and-white tom.

One-eye- pale gray she-cat, the oldest cat in ThunderClan. Virtually blind and deaf.

Dappletail- once-pretty tortiseshell she-cat with a lovely dappled coat.

SHADOWCLAN

Leader

Nightpelt- old black tom.

Deputy

Cinderfur- thin gray tom.

Medicine Cat

Runningnose- small gray-and- white tom.

Warriors

Stumpytail- brown tabby tom.
Apprentice, Brownpaw

Wetfoot- gray tabby tom.
Apprentice, Oakpaw

Littlecloud- very small tabby tom.

Queens

Dawncloud- small tabby.

Darkflower- black she-cat.

Tallpoppy- long-legged light brown tabby she-cat.

Elders

Ashfur- thin gray tom.

WINDCLAN

Leader

Tallstar- a black-and-white tom with a very long tail.

Deputy

Deadfoot- a black tom with a twisted paw.

Medicine Cat

Barkface- a short-tailed brown tom.

Warriors

Mudclaw- a mottled dark brown tom.
Apprentice, Webclaw

Tornear- a tabby tom.
Apprentice, Runningpaw

Onewhisker- a young brown tabby tom.
Apprentice, Whitepaw

Queens

Ashfoot- a gray queen.

Morningflower- a tortiseshell queen.

R I V E R C L A N

Leader

Crookedstar- a huge light-colored tabby with a twisted jaw.

Deputy

Leopardfur- unusually spotted golden tabby she-cat.

Medicine Cat

Mudfur- long-haired light brown tom.

Warriors

Blackclaw- smoky black tom.
Apprentice, Heavypaw

Stonefur- a gray tom with battle-scarred ears.

Apprentice, Shadepaw

Loudbelly- a dark brown tom.
Apprentice, Silverpaw

Silverstream- a pretty slender silver tabby.

Whiteclaw- a dark warrior.

CATS OUTSIDE CLANS

Smudge- plump, friendly black-and-white kitten who lives in a house at the edge of the forest.

Barley- black-and-white tom who lives on a farm close to the forest.

Brokenstar- long-haired dark brown tabby, formerly ShadowClan leader.

Blackfoot- large white tom with huge jet-black paws, formerly ShadowClan deputy.

Clawface- battle-scarred brown tom.

Boulder- silver tabby tom.

Ravenpaw- sleek black cat with a white-tipped tail.

Princess- a light brown tabby with a distinctive white chest and paws- a kittypet.

Cloudkit- Princess's firstborn kit; a long-haired white tom.

CHAPTER 1

[image]

Cinderpaw stared at the Thunderpath before her, the strong scent of monsters reeking off of it. The foul stench tingled her mouth, as the warm sun beat down on her gray pelt. The snow glistened at the warm heat, making the Thunderpath warmer than it should be for the middle of leafbare. Even though her mentor told her not to, Cinderpaw still followed Fireheart out to the ShadowClan border, to help receive a message from Tigerclaw. Though the Thunderpath wasn't that new to the cats of ThunderClan, it was still dangerous, and easy to make a mistake. Knowing this, Cinderpaw knew she had to stay cautious, but determined. Perhaps after this deed, Cinderpaw could show her true power by fighting off ShadowClan with her mentor and Tigerclaw, she could become a warrior early, and be known for generations to come, and become one of the strongest warriors that has ever lived. *What's wrong, Cinderpaw? You can do this! You don't have to be afraid!* Cinderpaw narrowed her eyes as she looked up towards the sky, then back at the Thunderpath.

Taking a step, her paw reached the warm and sticky surface of the Twoleg Thunderpath. The coast was clear, for all she could see was the black path for as far as Cinderpaw could see. As she paced across the path, Fireheart and Tigerclaw had become clearer and clearer into view. Cinderpaw opened her mouth to breathe in the fresh, leafbare breeze, to scent the smell of a Monster had gotten stronger, which meant one was getting closer. Cinderpaw became bewildered, when the bright sun was cast out of view, and a bright-red monster towered over her, running straight towards her. Cinderpaw's eyes widened as she saw the monster, frozen with shock. The gray she-cat let out a yowl in pain as she tried to get away, but something crushed her leg to the ground, making her crash to the Thunderpath.

"Cinderpaw!" Cinderpaw heard Fireheart yowl, as she struggled to her paws, only to fail, and fall once more. "Cinderpaw! What are you doing here?! I thought I told you to stay back at camp!" Fireheart puffed, baring his teeth at the apprentice. Fireheart shook his head, as he grabbed Cinderpaw by the scruff, dashing off of the Twoleg-infested path, and back to camp. As Cinderpaw's body swayed at the movement of being carried away, thoughts ran through her mind. *Why did I do that?*

To become strong, and make everyone proud.

But Fireheart doesn't seem proud of you...

But with time, he'll think I'll be really brave, right?

I don't know, Cinderpaw, will anyone forgive you?

Of course they will! They'll know that you're strong, deep down, and they'll make you a warrior as soon as you heal!

Are you sure?

Of course I'm sure! Just don't give up Cinderpaw, because there will always be hope!

"There will always be hope..." Cinderpaw mewed under her breath as she closed her eyes, the warm and friendly scents of ThunderClan

bringing her back, and the sunlight that flooded into the hollow warmed her pelt.

There will always be hope...

CHAPTER 2

[image]

Cinderpaw opened her eyes, as she found herself laying in a bed of moss, located in ThunderClan's medicine den. Sunlight just managed to creep through the entrance of the cave. Cinderpaw still couldn't move, but her foot didn't sear with as much pain. So... Now what? Cinderpaw could tell she wasn't going anywhere any time soon, but her determination to become a strong warrior was still at hand. Would she ever be able to move? Will she ever get to live the dream of being a warrior? Or was she just asking for too much, and her destiny wasn't made for fighting?

"Ah, so you're awake," meowed a raspy voice from the other side of the cave, making Cinderpaw jump out of her thoughts. She craned her neck as far as she could to see Yellowfang, ThunderClan's medicine cat pad up to her side, a bunch of leaves in her mouth. "H-how long have I been out for?" Cinderpaw mewed, watching Yellowfang apply the leaves to her foot. She winced at the sting a little, but soon over came it as the juices saoked into her hind leg. It seemed as if the raggedy old she- cat had just ignored her, focusing on her work alone. "Y-Yellowfang-"

"What in the name of StarClan were you thinking?" Cinderpaw seemed confused, wondering what Yellowfang was referring to. "Wh-What? What do you-"

"Fireheart told you to here in camp while he recieved the message from Tigerclaw. But you disobeyed him. And now, you must pay the price."

"Th-the price?"

"By the looks of your wound, it looks like the chances are low of you returning to your warrior- in- training duties. That leg of yours could be holding you back. It looks like you might not be able to use it the same way you could before." Cinderpaw gasped, as her hopes and dreams were crushed. Thoughts ran through her mind once more, making her wonder, *Did I make the wrong decision?*

Of course you didn't! You can still prove everyone wrong, right?

But what about what Yellowfang just said? About me not becoming a warrior?

You can still prove them wrong though! You can still do this, I know you can! You just need to have hope!

But... What if you're wrong? What if... What if I'll never fight on the battlefield, protecting my Clan and Clanmates for what is right? What if I'm stuck with no future... Forever?

Don't say that! Everyone has a future, even you! I know you're going to have an amazing future, where everyone will love you for who you are, but you have to keep trying! You can't give up!

"Cinderpaw! Thank StarClan you are okay!" Cinderpaw blinked out of her thoughts as she looked up at the entrance of the cave, to see Fireheart enter the medicine cat's den. "Cinderpaw, what were you thinking? Why didn't you listen to me?"

"I wanted to make you proud! If... I helped you deliver the message and fight off ShadowClan, you... You would've been so proud of me, and you might've asked Bluestar to make me a warrior early!" Fireheart let out a sigh, as he brushed his apprentice's head with his tail- tip. "Becoming a warrior takes time, and with time takes patience. If you didn't disobey me-"

"Fireheart, you should well know that every cat can make mistakes," Yellowfang interrupted, discarding the waste products of the herb that she had just applied to Cinderpaw's leg. "I still remember when you encountered me in the forest when you were still an apprentice. You weren't supposed to, but you fed me, breaking the Warrior Code, and disappointing a lot of cats of your own Clan. But, without mistakes, you would never learn from them, and you would never learn the good things that prosper from your mistakes. Not all mistakes are completely bad, and although Cinderpaw became injured because she did not listen to you, this incident has given her another option for her destiny."

Cinderpaw watched Fireheart's gaze closely, as he looked at Yellowfang. "What do you mean, Yellowfang?"

"I would like the oppurtunity for Cinderpaw to become *my* apprentice."

CHAPTER 3

[image]

"Your apprentice? You mean... You want *me* to be a medicine cat like you?" Cinderpaw mewed, as her gaze flicked from Fireheart to Yellowfang. Fireheart was her mentor but, would he easily let her go from training? And what about her say in the matter? Wasn't it her life, her future in this Clan? Cinderpaw felt like everyone else was making the decisions for her, and that nothing was her choice. "Cinderpaw, Yellowfang is giving you an opportunity for a second chance. I understand if you do not wish to take the path into medical interests, I understand, but this an opportunity you can not turn back to," Fireheart meowed, gazing at Cinderpaw with calm, green eyes. Cinderpaw strayed her sight from Fireheart, and out of the medicine cat den, to gaze upon the many cats in the clearing of the camp, sharing tongues on today's news. What should Cinderpaw do?

"B-but what about my warrior training-"

"When I look at you, Cinderpaw, I see potential." Yellowfang looked the apprentice up and down, a hint of pride in her voice. "There is more than one way to protect your Clan, even if it not just by tooth and claw. If a warrior becomes injured, where will he turn to? Without us, our Clan would die quicker with even the slightest of injuries, and the traditions of our ancestors from seasons ago would be no more. Without us, there would soon grow to be no more." Yellowfang sighed, as she took a pause. "But, Cinderpaw," she continued. "That choice, is up to you."

Cinderpaw wasn't sure what to say. If she became Yellowfang's

apprentice to become a medicine cat, she would still make a difference for her Clan, but would so many privileges that an average warrior could have. But if she didn't accept the offer, and her leg was never healed.... Then what? What rank would Cinderpaw be considered then? KIt? Elder? Apprentice? She'd never have a future...

Cinderpaw swallowed, as her mind swirled with thought. "Before I make my desicion..." she murmured so that only the two cats could hear her. "May I please have one more night to think about this?"

Fireheart bowed his head in respect, before departing the two she-cats. "That is fine with me, but Bluestar will wish to hear your answer by tomorrow's dawn." The ginger tom flicked his ears in a farewell, before trotting out of the medicine cat's den, and over to the HighRock, retrieving a piece of fresh kill before approaching his leader. Yellowfang was about to fetch her some herself, when she stopped. "Would you like you like me to get you anything, Cinderpaw?"

The gray cat shook her head, laying it on her forepaws afterwards. "No thank you, Yellowfang. I don't have that much of an appetite for tonight."

"Well then," she rasped, "Get some rest. Perhaps that can help you get over all of this stress. But I anticipate your answer by morning." With a flick of her tail, Yellowfang disappeared out of the cave, leaving Cinderpaw to ponder for herself. What *was* she going to do?

CHAPTER 4

[image]

Cinderpaw found herself deep in a forest, but not like the ones that she has ever seen before in ThunderClan territory. Where... Was she? Cinderpaw closed her eyes, and took a deep breath, tasting the crisp, night air. A hint of unknown cats also drifted the air as the gray she-cat took a breath, and she wondered who they would or could be. As she thought about the scent more, it tasted like all four Clans, their scent all mingled into one, but strangely, the scent belonged to none of the Clans. So was it a rogue's scent? A kittypet? Or was Cinderpelt's scenting getting as terrible as her foot, that she couldn't scent anything right?

Cinderpaw noticed that she was standing when she thought of her paw, and she looked back to see that it was perfectly healed, like the apprentice never got hit in the first place. But then, an idea sparked in her mind, a deadly one at that; Did Cinderpaw die in her sleep? Did she not make choice fast enough, and now she was not in StarClan, but far from it? But, if Cinderpaw was in StarClan, wouldn't she be greeted?

"Greetings, Cinderpaw." The gray she-car jumped at the sound of her name, by an unfamiliar voice, and she spun around to see a cream-colored she-cat with red splotches and aqua colored eyes behind her, as she flicked her tail in greeting to the apprentice. "Where am I...? Who are you...?"

"My name is Daisytail. I set the law in the Warrior Code that apprentices can not be any younger than 6 moons to start their training, and leave the nursery. Without my noble deed, I would not have kept my kits alive, let alone any of our kits that have grown up today. Perhaps the age of the Warrior would have passed sooner without me. But I stopped it."

"Where... Am I? A-am I dead?" Daisytail let out a *mmrow* of amusement, shaking her head. "You are in StarClan, young one, but you are merely dreaming. Soon, we will part ways, and I will only

remain only more than a memory to you."

"What do you need from me? Of all apprentices, of all of ThunderClan, of all of the forest.... Why did you choose me to speak to?"

"You, Cinderpaw, are special," Daisytail said in a straightforward manner. "I know. It seems like everyone has said that. But now... I regret that I made the decision to help Fireheart, and now that I made that mistake, have I truly wasted my life? Was I really that stupid to risk my life, just to disobey my mentor-"

"Your act was not foolish, Cinderpaw," Daisytail meowed, interrupting the apprentice. "It was proving that, even though you had to disobey your mentor to get through it, you went with your heart, and knew that disobeying was the thing you had to do in order to benifit for your Clan, and help make a difference for them. And even though you may bot be able to train like the warrior you have always wanted to be, destiny has chosen a different path for you. But it up to you to decide whether to take the chance or not."

"What do you think I should do, Daisytail?"

"That choice, is up to you, but for now, rest. You will need it for tomorrow morning, when you are ready to make that desicion. But remember this: even when you seem confused, or even in dismay on what future lies agead for you, always go with your heart..." Daisytail's voice drifted off as Cinderpaw's world darkened, and she returned to sleep once more.

When she awoke, Cinderpaw found herself in the medicing cat den, everything seemed to be in place. Yellowfang sat at her side, dressing her hind leg, pausing her work to look at her. "So, Cinderpaw, have you made your decision?"

Cinderpaw closed her eyes for a moment, letting the answer come to her from the dark. The answer that would determine her future. Finally, after a few heartbeats, Cinderpaw reopened her eyes, and looked at Yellofang with confidence, meowing, "I'll do it."

CHAPTER 5

[image]

As moons passed, Cinderpaw became a greater apprentice. She learned more about herbs, and prophecies, and helping cats whose lives were in danger. But, the night of her ceremony to become a true medicine cat, everything changed.

Cinderpaw, whose now name was Cinderpelt, walked along the path that took her and Yellowfang back home, to the hollow in ThunderClan. Thoughts racked her brain as she thought about the previous night, and how meeting cats from StarClan has really changed her life. But still, the question remained. Had she made the right choice? Should she have run out to help her former mentor, only to get hit by a monster on the ThunderPath? She enjoyed being a medicine cat and all but, the taste of adventure, and battle still lived in her heart. But now matter how hard she tried, one phrase from her dream last night stayed in her mind.

"Another chance..."

Cinderpaw touched her nose to the Moonstone, closing her eyes as she drifted off to sleep. By morning, she would become a true medicine cat, and she couldn't be more excited. The only issue was, now her path as a warrior was officially neglected, and no matter how much her faith in the past about of becoming a warrior was crushed, it seemed as if her destiny was chosen for her.

Cinderpaw blinked open her eyes to find herself deep in a StarClan forest, the faint whispers of the wind being the only sounds, along with the rush of water from a nearby stream. The apprentice's

whiskers twitched as two different StarClan cats appeared from the shadows, a speckled-gray tom with blue eyes, and another tom, a silvery-gray one, with amber eyes, long whiskers, and a sweeping, plumy tail that dusted the ground. Both of their gray pelts were tangled with stars, and their eyes glimmered like crystals. "Greetings, Cinderpaw," the older tom dipped his head in greeting, as the two StarClan members came closer to the she-cat. Cinderpaw dipped her head in respect to the two noble ancestors. Unlike most warriors, Cinderpaw, like all of the medicine cats of all of the Clans, have the tradition to all meet up at the Moonstone at half moon, and communicate through that special stone to speak with their ancestors. Sometimes though, StarClan can become very confusing, striking the medicine cat with a confusing prophecy, that can leave them pondering about it for moons, seasons even. What could these cats possibly want from Cinderpaw?

"My name is Goosefeather. I was a medicine cat of ThunderClan. And this, is my former apprentice, Featherwhisker," the tom introduced himself, flicking his tail towards Featherwhisker as he introduced the other tom. "How can I be of your assistance, Goosefeather, Featherwhisker?" Cinderpaw inquired as she tried to read the two tom's faces. Unfortunately though, Cinderpaw couldn't pick up anything, which made the gray cat wonder what they were hiding. "Cinderpaw," Featherwhisker meowed, whisking his plumy tail across the ground calmly. "Goosefeather and I have been watching your actions, ever since your injury, and we've noticed how you have hopes on a second chance."

'Wh-what?" Cinderpaw mewed, her eyes straying from the StarClan cat's eyes.

"Destiny is chosen by one cat's actions, by one cat's choices. Their destiny is their's, and their's alone. But you didn't have a choice. instead of having the choice of becoming a warrior, or medicine cat."

Cinderpaw was still confused. "What do you mean?"

"Cinderpelt, just always remember: There will *always* be a second chance." Cinderpelt's world became dark as Featherwhisker's words faded away. *A second chance...*

CHAPTER 6

[image]

Cinderpelt took a bite out of her mouse, eating her pain and sorrow away. Now that Yellowfang had passed on, Cinderpelt became the only medicine cat in ThunderClan, and the depression of her mentor's death sat like a stone in the bank of a river. For the past few sunrises, many cats passed by her den, stopping in momentarily to wish their condolences to the she-cat, but no more. The medicine den seemed empty without Yellowfang, although Cinderpelt was greeted most of her time. After the she-cat devoured the piece of prey, thoughts buzzed in her mind like a swarm of bees in a hive.

Suddenly, Cinderpelt's ears pricked in attention, as she heard a set of pawsteps enter her den, and she alertly lifted her head to meet Fireheart, her former mentor, and now, the deputy of ThunderClan. It seemed only days ago when she was just an apprentice, and as naive as she was, fate changed her future, and her place as the only medicine cat became truth. And her dream that she received at the Moonstone when she obtained her full name, was clear as day. The voices still rang in her ears.... *Another chance...* Cinderpelt was still confused as to what it meant, but now wasn't the time to think about that. Fireheart could need something very important, and Cinderpelt did not want to ruin her first duty as the main medicine cat. She was already worried about her mistakes that she had made in the past that would never be forgiven... The lives she had let down, and now were separated from their Clanmates, the disobedience of her past lead her to her injury that would never be healed, the same injury that lead Cinderpelt to where she was now.

"Cinderpelt," Fireheart meowed, settling himself on the floor of the medicine den. "I cannot suppress how apologetic I am on the death of your mentor, Cinderpelt. She will deeply missed, but never

forgotten." Fireheart licked his forepaw, rubbing it against his head before continuing. "Her spirit will surely watch over you from StarClan. She loved you as if you were her own daughter." Cinderpelt stared blankly at the ground, her whiskers twitching in response. "But, Cinderpelt, with Yellowfang's death, comes a great responsibility. Cinderpelt," The ginger tom paused, making the she-cat's head lift in attention.

"Y-yes, Fireheart?"

"Cinderpelt," he repeated, trying to decide on how to word his next sentences. "I have trust in you, that you can take up all of the responsibilities of a true medicine cat. You will save lives, and you will fill our Clan with hope. What I need to know is... Are you comfortable with this position? You will be helping your Clan by giving them health, determination, hope.... *Another chance*. Are you okay with this role?" Cinderpelt felt herself stiffen at the words "Another chance," but she just managed to mew out a small "yes," frozen in shock. What was the true meaning of another chance? It still seemed fuzzy to her, but Cinderpelt just shook it off, watching Fireheart rise to his paws, slowly padding out of her den. "Get some rest, Cinderpelt. As ThunderClan's medicine cat, none of us want you pressured."

"Thank you," Cinderpelt murmured, watching her former mentor leave. As the she-cat curled up in her nest that night, her dreams became fuzzy and confusing, completely out of place. But that second chance still stuck in her mind.

What was this second chance that supposively existed? And truly, was this "second chance," made for her?

CHAPTER 7

[image]

Cinderpelt blinked open her eyes as she found herself in a forest. One that she has been in many times, always in her dreams though. It was the place where she became confused, and puzzled about her options. Her future. Her *chances.* Cinderpelt's paws tingled with the sense of adventure, the lush, green grass squashed against her pawpads. A cool wind ran through her dark gray pelt, the scents of catmint and barley tingling her nostrils. The smell of herbs reminded Cinderpelt of her duties as ThunderClan's medicine cat, *alone*. She heaved a sigh, the stress of her new responsibilities returning once more. Though it was short-lived, because like every other time Cinderpelt finds herself in this same forest. A shadow emerged from the shadows, revealing an old and familiar face, one that almost made Cinderpelt's heart almost pound out of her chest.

"So," the familiar cat rasped, making CInderpelt prick her ears in attention. "Y-Yellowfang!" she dipped her head in greeting, and respect. "It is so good to see you again!"

"How are you enjoying the new position as medicine cat?" Cinderpelt's paws pricked at the reminder, as she mewed, "It is a lot of responsibility, but, with time, the weight of responsibility will become lighter and lighter with experience." Yellowfang let out a *mmrow* of laughter, changing into a sitting position. Cinderpelt repeated her actions. If she was going to be in a dream realm with her former mentor, she might as well get a little comfortable.

"You know," Yellowfang started, rasping a licked paw over her ear. "You sound just like me. It's good to see ThunderClan's in good paws."

Cinderpelt dipped her head in agreement, her mind swirling with

thoughts. That's when she decided to ask Yellowfang: "Yellowfang, ever since I recieved my full name, StarClan has been drilling the morals of 'second chances,' in my dreams lately. I don't suppose you know anything about that matter, do you? Is it just a bunch of mousedung? Or should it really mean anything? This is StarClan we are talking about, after all."

Yellowfang stayed quiet for a few moments, her amber eyes gazing on her gray forepaws, grass brushing overtop of them. "Cinderpelt," she rasped, closing her eyelids.

"I know what you are recalling about. But, if you trust me, you will learn what this second chance means in time-"

Cinderpelt seemed nerve-racked, and confused. "But what if I do not? What if I fail and do not receive this informa-"

"You will," Yellowfang cut her off, whisking her tail in reassurance, and finally meeting the she-cat's eyes. "I know you will. *StarClan* knows you will. It is destiny, and destiny is alredy chosen for you. You cannot change destiny, but, you can change how you see it."

Cinderpelt was tense, and was about to open her mouth to say something, when she stopped, watching her former mentor rise to her feet. "Have faith in me, Cinderpelt," she rasped. "But, do not let destiny rule your life. Take care of what is in front of you. Protect all of those you hold dear to you, even with your life as a medicine cat. But for now, just sleep." Cinderpelt watched Yellowfang pad off into the shadows of the trees once more, her eyelids drooping with

the tug of sleep, until finally, she drifted away from the world, covered in a dark blanket of rest.

CHAPTER 8

[image]

Cinderpelt blinked her eyes out of sleep, and let out a yawn. Just as the she-cat had suspected, her roles as the lone and main medicine cat became easier and easier, like the practices of hunting or fighting. But unlike the past, Cnderpelt did not mind the role of healing rather than fighting than when she was just an apprentice. The feel of adventure did still long in her bones, but it did not ache as much as before. Cinderpelt realized that healing was helping other cats, and dedicating everything she had to her Clan, even if it wasn't by spreading blood across the forest floor.

Moons had passed since Yellowfang's death, and the emptiness of the medicine den seemed to fade away over time. It wasn't that Cinderpelt missed the old grump, it's just that even the unbearable things in life can soon dissapear with only a memory of the sadness remaining. And now, with a new pair of paws helping around ThunderClan's medical department, Cinderpelt's weight of responsibility had seemed to have been lifted even lighter.

Leafpaw, one of ThunderClan's new leader, Firestar's, daughters, came trotting in the den, alongside her littermate, Squirrelpaw. Both cats were in an argument, fear glazing one of the apprentices, determination in the other's. Cinderpelt pricked her ears, as she listened to the sisters arguments, padding over to her stash of herbs at the back of the den.

"But Squirrelpaw," Leafpaw mewed. "Without me, or Firestar, or anyone, you'll be alone and hopeless! Something could come out to get you and you won't be ready-"

"I'll be fine," Squirrelpaw let out a reassuring purr, flicking her tail over her sister's ears. "I won't be alone, I promise. I'll have

Brambleclaw, and Feathertail, and Stormfur, and all sorts of cats from the different Clans to protect me, if I can't protect myself, that is." Leafpaw still didn't seemed persuaded, her dusky brown tail drooping and trailing the ground behind her. She picked up her head once again when she heard Squirrelpaw's voice once again. "And hey," she meowed encouragingly, no matter what, StarClan will always keep us together."

Leafpaw let out a sigh, as if to push away all of the sadness, looking over at Cinderpelt for once. "Cinderpelt," she said. "Do you think Squirrelpaw should really leave with Brambleclaw? Perhaps even with no return?"

Cinderpelt let out a purr, stroking her apprentice's back with her tail. "Leafpaw, I'm sure Squirrelpaw will be fine on this journey. Just because you aren't in sight of eachother, doesn't mean you are not far apart. StarClan keeps all cats' bonds close together, no matter how many foxlengths you may be away. StarClan will watch out for you both, and keep you connected, even in the darkest of times."

Leafpaw's eyes seemed to brighten a little from the sadness, as she turned back to her sister once more, her tail raising a little higher. "Well, Squirrelpaw, if you really have to go, then I won't stop you. Just.... make sure you come back, alright?" The golden she-cat let out a *mrrow* of amusement, as she nuzzled her companion's cheek. "Of course, you mousebrain! Why would you think I'd ever leave you?" The two apprentices gave a short nod of thanks to Cinderpelt before dissapearing to receive the latest news on ThunderClan borders and prey. Cnderpelt watched them walk and talk happily, as if nothing else ever mattered besides their friendship.

Cinderpelt purred happily, rising to her feet to join the other cats.

She promised that she would do anything for her Clan, no matter what it took.

CHAPTER 9

[image]

Cinderpelt took a deep breath, inhaling all of the new scents. Even though it had been some time since the moved to their new territory, a well-sized cliffed-off area that, like the other four Clan camps, surrounded a lake, an island that sat not far from the shore, allowing cats to walk across over a tree-trunk bridge, to replace Fourtrees that was soon left behind on their journey.

As she gazed out of her den, everything seemed quiet and calm. Pairs, or groups of cats sat around in different places, sharing tongues happily. Firestar sat underneath the Highledge, biting into a vole while Sandstorm sat beside him, purring as she waited her turn. Very faintly, Cinderpelt could hear the mewling of kits in the nursery, begging one of the queens to allow them to play outside.

A sudden yowl in pain caught Cinderpelt out of her daydreaming. She quickly rose to her paws, trotting over to the nursery quickly to see Sorreltail, laying on her side, her swelled belly rippling in pain. *Sorreltail is kitting,* the gray she-cat thought to herself, as she padded in and called for her apprentice. Leafpool entered in heartbeats later, her gaze landing on the queen. "Help her up," Cinderpelt grunted as she lifted Sorreltail up a little, her weight extremely heavy because of her kitting. Leafpool came to her other side, and propped Sorreltail to lean on either medicine cats' shoulder. They rushed her to the medicine den, laying her down to relieve the pain a little. "C...Cinderpelt...." Sorreltail breathed, meeting eyes with the gray she-cat. "I... I can feel them coming..." Cinderpelt nodded, as she ordered Leafpool to get a stick for their queen, while she assisted the cat with her kits.

Soon, as if a turn of events were bound to happen, Brackenfur, who was keeping watch outside of the ThunderClan camp, dashed through the bramble tunnel, his eyes wide with fear, and a distressed cry of terror escaped his throat. He looked as if he saw LionClan come at him, and ripped him to shreds before his own

eyes. Cinderpelt watched Firestar's calm and relaxed gaze turn into a concerned and tense. He rose to his paws and dashed over to Brackenfur, to see what had happened.

Brackenfur's voice was so quiet and out of breath, that Cinderpelt had to strain her ears to hear what he was saying.

"*Badgers. There are BADGERS heading towards our camp.*" Brackenfur trembled as he gasped for a shaky breath, the Clan stiffening in his follow. Firestar's green eyes lit up with shock, jumping back a tail-length at Brackenfur's words. "*Badgers*?" Firestar breathed, repeating Brackenfur's words. The ginger tom blinked a few times before he turned towards his Clan once more. "ThunderClan," he meowed, a bit of shake in his voice. "No matter what happens next, protect our young and elders. Protect this camp. Protect *ThunderClan.* We will fight like LionClan to protect those who-"

Firestar broke off as a snarl growled from the distance. Cinderpelt tasted the air as the other cats pricked their ears to listen. There were about 3 or 4 of them, all fierce and bloodthirsty. Their strong smell musked out the faint smell of the forest that remained in her nostrils. Sorreltail's yowls remained, alerting Cinderpelt at the multiple tasks at hand. As if on cue, 3 badgers exploded into camp, a roaring explosion of chaos.

Cinderpelt sheathed her claws as she braced impact, watching her Clanmates fight off the badgers. One lunged for the medicine den, fury pounding in Cinderpelt's chest at the sight of it. *So, this is what battle feels like.* The she-cat lunged at it, making sure it was far from Sorreltail. "Cinderpelt!" Leafpool cried from the entrance of the camp, the stick falling from her jaws.

"You're going to get yourself killed!"

"We cannot change our destiny, Leafpool. We just have the power to know and accept it." Cinderpelt growled as she striked a blow at the badger's muzzle, the world going dark as gave Leafpool the memo to stay safe...

CHAPTER 10

[image]

A small gray she-kit opened her jaws wide and let out a yawn. Unable to peel open her eyes, she turned around her head frantically, but to no avail, no luck. She could hear mewling from other kittens, ones she had suspected were her littermates, that were soon muffled by the warm scent of milk. The kit nosed around blindly, until a tail edged her towards a warm body, and urged her to suckle. As she did so, she could just hear the soft praises of other voices, ones that were soothing and calm. "They're so beautiful..." a male voice murmered.

"Thank you, Firestar," replied a warm, motherly voice.

"What do you plan on naming them?"

There was a short pause of silence from the cat she predicted was her mother, before answering Firestar.

"Honeykit, Poppykit..."

"And Cinderkit."

Cinderkit felt the air get thin as the cats who had surrounded she and her new siblings and mother. It soon relaxed after a few heartbeats when Firestar meowed, "Those are beautiful names..."

WARRIORS: Brightheart's Dream EXCLUSIVE SNEAK PEEK!

[image]

Thank you all so much for reading my fanmade novella: "Cinderpelt's Chance." If you enjoyed this book, here is a sneak peek to an upcoming book I am planning out:

Brightpaw is young and strong, and almost too ready to become a warrior, along with her fellow apprentice and friend, Swiftpaw. But it seems when a pack of dogs attacks the two cats, kills Swiftpaw, and rips half of her face off, it seems that Brightpaw's life will never be the same. Will Brightpaw ever get the chance of becoming the warrior she dreamed to be? Or has her wounds scarred her for life?